

RAY PRESENTS



THE first luncheon of the Canadian Pioneer Film Club will be held at the Royal York, Wednesday, January 31st, at 12.30. Get your appetites ready for beefsteak and kidney pie, plus Cheshire Cheese, according to the tradition of Dr. Samuel Johnson who made the Cheshire Cheese Club famous for its food even to this day.

They tell me at the Royal York that beefsteak and kidney pie is one of their specialties, that they can make it to the King's taste, so boys and girls with or without teeth, here's food that won't take much chewing.

Ye Pioneers are guests for this, our first feast. Get your application in quickly. The guest speaker will be one of us, coming here from New York to start us off on a Pioneer Club career. Get your stories ready for the big prizes and let the wife or your best girl hear you tell them, just by way of practice, because there will be a prize for the best storyteller as well as the story.

WELCOME. Ernest O. Smithies, application received. Ernie has been manager of the Capitol at Kingston since 1921. Previously he was an operator at the Aster, the Globe, Strand and Allen Theatres at Toronto. In 1914 he was manager of a theatre at Kingston, Ont. Returning there in 1921.

An application from J. Smith (you know Jake) in business since 1910 as an exhibitor, and now operating the Revue and Tecumseh Theatres, Toronto.

Another application from Haskel M. Masters, General Manager of the United Artists; Mr. Masters started his show business career in Boston in 1914, which gives him twenty-six years.

An application for membership in the Canadian Pioneer Club from Fred Pursel, Lyric, Simcoe, Ont. Fred has been at the Lyric since Oct. 14th, 1909, in fact he opened this theatre about thirty-one years ago; and tells me he has been a Digest subscriber so many years he cannot count them. Fred is now associated with the Allen Theatres and does not forget to mention that it is a most happy association.

And now, here is Jack Arthur, district manager for Famous-Players and for so many years associated with the Uptown Theatre. Jack started his show business in 1907, thirty-three years ago. It is worth a trip to Toronto to see how young an old timer can look. Jack started in Road Shows, later he joined the Griffin Amusement Co. In 1912 he was musical director at the Majestic Theatre, Toronto. Jack did the first actual scoring for pictures at Loew's Winter Garden, Toronto, in 1914. Later he was associated with the Regent Theatre, the days of orchestras and theatre atmosphere. Remember the date, Wed., Jan. 31st, and the place, Royal York Hotel, Toronto, 12.30 p.m.

BUT to return to the Neely Legislation which has been, on again, off again, on again for a few years. We, in Canada, that is those of us who are exhibitors, have been indulging in a good deal of new theatre building recently.

Many theatres in Canada have been promoted through private and business financial institutions. Those who have financed their theatres through Financial Co-operation know the importance of product. The first question asked is, "Where are you going to get pictures, from which trademarks and how many can you buy?" We leave the exhibitors interested in such financing to answer the question of how much finance is dependent on the buying power of pictures; and how little finance would be available if theatre-promoters, or exhibitors, told their financial interests that pictures could only be purchased singly, that one could not contract for a block or more of pictures, that contracts had to be made for each individual picture after the picture was seen and in competition with thousands of other exhibitors who might want the same picture at the same time. Chaos is a mild word for such a policy of buying and selling.

TAKE the situation which has arisen on account of the War. A number of pictures will have to be eliminated because the countries at war cannot present anti-war pictures or pictures with peace propaganda or themes in their story. Stars and players, etc., foreign-born, have had to be eliminated according to the nationality of these players. Producers and players sometimes have a habit of quitting their company, or unfortunately dying. There are other Acts of God which interfere with production and distribution schedules; and incidentally the habit which the big circuits have of tying up product because of extended runs, etc.

In England, it is necessary to tradeshow all pictures, but I do not know how much this has eliminated blind booking, because most of the trade shows I have attended have been minus exhibitors, the theatre being filled with the press, studio friends, etc.

James Roosevelt, the son of President Roosevelt, has been associated with Mr. Samuel Goldwyn in Motion Pictures for approximately one year. He took the affirmative side of this debate-in-print with Mr. Depinet on the negative. Mr. Roosevelt said, "Blind disregard of a situation which is yearly becoming more and more acute may easily lead to legislative action—I am firmly convinced that the situation can be met by the industry itself".

MR. DEPINET contended that the exhibitor could not afford to risk theatre investment "without an assured source of merchandise". Speaking on the question of morals vs. block-booking. Mr. Depinet stated that, "The fact that motion pictures are rented to a theatre in a block or rented individually has nothing whatever to do with the moral quality of the product".

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ORPHEUM THEATRE REBUILT

Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.—After being closed for a period of six weeks, the Orpheum Theatre re-opened under the management of A. C. Hartshorn. The theatre has been rebuilt, and seats approximately 600. New sound and equipment has been installed.

Mr. Hartshorn has been in the business for 13 years, having started as an usher at the Pantages (Imperial) Theatre, Toronto. The original Orpheum Theatre was opened some eighteen years ago.

RIO THEATRE OPENED

Victoria, B.C. — Ralph Calladine's Columbia Theatre, has been renovated at a cost of \$15,000. Exterior alterations, new marquee, and new seats have been installed. The theatre is now called The Rio.

Saskatchewan Operators Protest License Renewal Fee

RENEWAL RATE HIGHER THAN IN OTHER PROVINCES

Regina, Sask — Moving picture operators in Regina have carried a protest to the Saskatchewan government in an attempt to gain a reduction in the annual renewal license fee for moving picture machine operators.

Hope of some reduction in the annual renewal license fee charged moving picture operators, was held out to the delegation of operators which waited on Hon. E. M. Culliton, provincial secretary. Actual amount of the reduction sought was not revealed.

Mr. Culliton heard the representation and indicated that full consideration would be given and that it was probable some reduction would be granted.

Apparently there is no protest against the present examination fee and the initial license fee, as operators maintain that nothing should be done to reduce the standard of efficiency maintained by the operators. They are concentrating upon getting a reduction in the annual renewal fee.

Present examination fee is \$5, the initial license fee is \$10, and the renewal license fee is \$10.

Representations were made to the government some time ago protesting that renewal fees were out of line with fees charged in other provinces, and particular reference was made to the scale of fees charged in British Columbia, which are somewhat lower than in Saskatchewan.

CHILDREN SEE SPECIAL "ROYAL VISIT" MATINEES

Regina, Sask. — Majority of Regina's 7,000 public school children were permitted to attend the showing of "The Royal Visit", at the Met Theatre, during school hours. Members of the Regina public school board granted a request from the Red Cross Society urging that children be given time enough out of school to see the picture. Ten percent of the gross proceeds of the show went to the Red Cross. Children were charged 10 cents. All children in grades two and up were permitted to attend.

ZERO — BOX-OFFICE BAD

Winnipeg, Man. — With weather some twenty-nine degrees below zero, theatre business has taken a ride down right in line with the temperature drop. The Tivoli Theatre is doing some real business with its new second run policy.

SIGURDSON IN SASK.

Regina, Sask. — Recent visitor to theatres throughout southern Saskatchewan was Leo Sigurdson, of Dominion Sound Equipment, Winnipeg.

CANADIAN PIONEER FILM CLUB

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

NAME TOWN.....

PROVINCE OCCUPATION

What year did you start in Show Business?

Where?

General Remarks:

No applicant is eligible for membership unless he or she is now associated with the Film Industry and has been in Show Business for twenty-five years or more.

Fill in application form or send a letter answering the above questions.

Address: The Editor, The Canadian Moving Picture Digest, 259 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario.

Shooting The Stars

"Bombay Nights", Louis Bromfield's latest novel just concluded as a Cosmopolitan Magazine serial, has been purchased by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer as a starring vehicle for Joan Crawford. The story concerns a noted beauty and ex-chorus girl, divorced from a wealthy American husband, travels, and in Bombay meets her ex-husband who falls in love with her again. J. Walter Ruben will produce . . . John Littel has been engaged by Columbia for the principal role in the new drama entitled, "Men Without Souls", a prison story which will feature an all-male cast . . . Warners announce that sixteen top-budget pictures now in preparation at the studio, are scheduled to go into production during the next five months . . . Melvyn Douglas will be co-starred with Rosalind Russell in MGM's remake of "Dulcy" . . . Frank Capra-Robert Riskin have signed Tony Martin for their musical production . . . Sol Lesser puts Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize Play before the

cameras this week . . . Twentieth Century-Fox have made three additions to the cast of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star", Donald Meek, William Gargan and Mary Beth Hughes . . . "Married, Pretty and Poor" has been retitled, "Saturday's Children". The film is now being produced at the Warner Studio featuring John Garfield and Anne Shirley . . . The same studio has signed William K. Howard, director, to a term contract effective February 1st . . . Ingrid Bergman, the new Selznick star introduced in "Intermezzo", will next be seen in a new screen version of the story of Joan of Arc, to be released through U. A. . . . Jane Withers is on a six week's personal appearance tour . . . Andrea Leeds and Warner Baxter will co-star at the 20th Century-Fox Studio in "Earthbound" . . . Vivien Leigh has reported on the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lot for her role in "Waterloo Bridge" under the direction of Mervyn LeRoy.

MOVE TO SHORTEN THEATRE PROGRAMS

Winnipeg, Man. — There is a growing feeling amongst the exhibitors of Western Canada against the double feature programmes, and the giving away of gifts to lady patrons. Many theatres have reversed their policy in this respect. This is especially true of the larger centre exhibitors. Motion picture theatre managers have been steadily registering their objections to film branch managers.

Some of the Winnipeg neighborhood theatres, of the better class, have thrown out the double features and added shorts to give patrons their good money worth at each entertainment in their theatres. This has been received with favor by the women customers who have been finding the long programmes irksome and it also disorganizes their engagements, as they remain too long in the theatres. "Get 'em in and get 'em out quickly", is their motto.

"DRUNK DRIVING" TIE-UP

Calgary, Alta. — The documentary short film, "Drunk Driving", was shown at the Capitol Theatre here for one week in conjunction with the Calgary Junior Chamber of Commerce public safety campaign. Members of the junior chamber attended the opening show in a body. Brief speeches were made from the stage by Chief of Police Col. David Ritchie, and president of the junior chamber, R. L. Fenerty.

DORFMAN CONCENTRATES

Herbert, Sask. — J. L. Dorfman has closed his store here and will devote his whole time to the picture show business. He will continue to live in Herbert.

GIVEAWAYS AT PLAYHOUSE

Winnipeg, Man. — The Playhouse Theatre, Winnipeg, largest vaudeville house in this district, has inaugurated a policy of dinnerware for the ladies, with small service charge of five cents.

REPORT CO-OPERATION WITH FILM COMMITTEE

Winnipeg, Man. — After four years of effort, the better moving picture committee of Winnipeg has made great progress in securing suitable Saturday afternoon moving picture bills for children in the Winnipeg theatres, Mrs. H. Hastings, the president of the Winnipeg Parent-Teacher association reported at a meeting of the latter organization.

A preview committee, composed of representatives of various organizations, was in a position to know which pictures were suitable for children. Mrs. Hastings said, managers of picture theatres running films on Saturday afternoons which the committee deemed unsuitable, were promptly requested to adjust their programmes accordingly.

PLAN TOWNSHIP THEATRE

Toronto, Ont. — I. Freeman, of this city, contemplates erecting a theatre and store block on the east side of Avenue Road, near St. Germain Ave., North York Township. The theatre would have an accommodation of 750 seats.

NEW LUX THEATRE OPENS

Vancouver, B.C. — The Lux Theatre, located at 55 East Hastings Street, was recently opened by A. B. Calori. Built at a cost of \$50,000, the theatre seats 870 and features the latest in theatre construction, sound, and comfort. T. L. Kerr was the architect.

SURRENDER CHARTERS

Toronto, Ont. — Famous Players Corp. has surrendered charters of three wholly-owned subsidiary companies; The Oakwood Amusement Co., Paramount Peterboro Theatres Ltd. and United Theatres Ltd. The assets of these companies are being transferred to F.P.P.C.

COLUMBIA DIVIDEND

New York, N.Y. — At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Columbia Pictures Corporation, the regular quarterly dividend of 68¾c per share and the balance unpaid of the dividend due for the preceding quarter of 34¾c per share were declared on the \$2.75 Convertible Preferred Stock of the Company, payable on February 15th, 1940, to stockholders of record February 1st.

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Mr. Depinet said, "The enactment of any such legislation as that proposed in Congress by Senator Matthew Mansfield Neely would result in the closing of a vast number of theatres, largely the smaller theatres unable to compete in buying strength with the larger houses, it would increase selling costs, for the absence of block booking would require individual sales effort for each picture, and instead of improving the quality of pictures, it would lessen their merit by making the production of every picture an even more precarious adventure and unjustifiable risk

of huge sums of money without a reasonable assurance of an opportunity for return".



Trade Minister Euler Appoints Col. John A. Cooper, Canadian Film Commissioner
During Absence Of John Grierson In Australia

"The Hunchback of Notre Dame" Great Drama "Judge Hardy and Son" Good Hardy Fare

"THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME"

RKO RADIO

RKO RADIO, whose record for producing hits this season, has no equal in the Industry, have topped all their previous successes, with their talkie version of the Victor Hugo classic, "The Hunchback of Notre Dame". For years, anyone discussing "The Hunchback", would refer to it as the Lon Chaney picture. But now a new "Hunchback" has arisen, and for many years to come "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" will be associated with the name of Charles Laughton. To compare the performances of the late Lon Chaney and that of Laughton is an impossibility. In the first place, it is a good many years since Lon Chaney performed in the part; the technique of motion pictures has changed so drastically, that what was considered great in those days, would be deemed "scenery-chewing" to-day. Personally, our own recollection of Chaney in the role is only hazy, while it will be many months before the forcefulness of Laughton's characterization will be erased from the mind. It will haunt you, and thrill you, and you will say that you have just seen one of the greatest performances by a male star, since the inception of the talking picture.

Laughton's make-up deserves a paragraph by itself, so fantastically horrible it appears. It is undoubtedly the most repulsive spectacle ever presented to a motion picture audience. Puffed cheeks, misshapen mouth, one eye, grotesque nose and ears, plus the hump, make Laughton the kind of vision that will make a chronic drunk go on the wagon.

Since this is principally a horror picture, it contains many more horrors than just Laughton's make-up. Supreme among these is the flogging of Laughton for molesting Maureen O'Hara. Tied to a pillory, in full view of the Paris populace, Laughton is stripped of his rags to the waist, and given fifty lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails on the bare hump. Another masterpiece of gruesomeness is the torturing of Maureen O'Hara, to make her confess a murder she didn't commit. Another episode is the defense of Notre Dame by the Hunchback, including the pouring of molten metal from the mouths of the gargoyles onto the mob below.

"The Hunchback of Notre Dame"—RKO version, features many outstanding performances in addition to that of the star. Chief among these is the work of Maureen O'Hara, the little

Irish miss who Laughton introduced to the American and Canadian public in "Jamaica Inn". Miss O'Hara is picked by many American critics, Jimmy Fiddler in particular, as the outstanding discovery of 1939, and her performance in "The Hunchback" is a strong argument to back up this contention. Beautiful in form and face, she possesses a dramatic fire that should burn brightly in the coming year.

Sir Cedric Hardwicke, always a brilliant performer, outdoes himself as the villainous Frolo, whose spurned desire for Esmeralda (Maureen O'Hara) causes him to seek her death, rather than see her belong to another. Edmond O'Brien, a newcomer to this reviewer, shows promise as the love interest. Thomas Mitchell is excellent as the King of the Beggars, with Minna Gombell a welcome addition to the cast as the Beggar Queen. Others in the cast, and deserving of special mention include famed Broadway star Walter Hampden as the Archbishop of Notre Dame, Harry Davenport as King Louis XI, Alan Marshal as a captain of the archers, George Zucco as the Procurator ("D.A." to you), and the late Etienne Girardot as the King's Physician.

Great credit must go to Sonya Levien for her screenplay, and Bruno Frank for his adaptation of the book. Pandora S. Berman himself was in charge of production, while for director, RKO borrowed William Dieterle, responsible for many of the costume spectacles at Warner Brothers. Both Berman and Dieterle hit new highs for their respective efforts.

"The Hunchback of Notre Dame" is not for anyone with a weak stomach, or heart, but it is a picture that all who can stand it, certainly should see, and from a glance at the record-smashing business the picture is doing in its early runs, it looks like almost every man, woman and adolescent can stand it.

Running time—114 minutes.

"SCREWBALL FOOTBALL"

VITAPHONE

THE funniest Merrie Melodies cartoon since "Detouring America", this is another of those tongue-in-the-cheek cartoons, that poke fun at life in general. Features a big-time football classic, complete with the teams and thousands and thousands of fans. You'll roar with laughter at the antics of the two teams, and the spectators. Really a riot.

Running time—7 minutes.

"JUDGE HARDY AND SON"

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

THIS is one of the best of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's popular "Judge Hardy's Family" series. In addition to the ever-welcome quota of laughs, "Judge Hardy and Son" contains considerable drama that will cause a tugging at the heart-strings of the grown-ups as well as the youngsters.

Film features the same principals as "Judge Hardy's Family", namely Lewis Stone, Mickey Rooney, Cecilia Parker, Fay Holden, and Sara Haden, with Ann Rutherford as Andy Hardy's girl, Polly. Additions to the cast of "Judge Hardy and Son" include June Preisser, whom you will recall as the "child-star" in "Babes in Arms", Maria Ouspenskaya, Henry Hull, Martha O'Driscoll, Margaret Early and several others.

As the picture opens, Andy Hardy is having financial trouble. When he hears about an essay contest with a first prize of \$50 Andy considers his troubles are over. He promptly buys news tubes for his tires, orders a summer tuxedo, and sends his girl, Polly, gardenias as a going-away present, promising to pay for all these items on the day the contest winners are announced. But much to his horror, Andy discovers that the \$50 prize only applies to girl contestants, and it looks like Andy is headed for bankruptcy. Unwilling to give up the ship so soon, Andy schemes to let one of his young-lady acquaintances enter his essay, and split the prize-money. The first girl he approaches is Euphrasia Clark, a giggly blonde, who agrees, and then backs out, but threatens to tell her father of the scheme, if Andy doesn't take her to the big 4th of July Fireworks Display. A couple of other similar attempts fail and finally Andy in disgust, gives the essay, with no strings attached, to Elvie Horton. In the meantime two other themes have been running through the film, Mother Hardy's serious illness, and the search for the daughter of an old couple, about to lose their home. In the first case, Mother Hardy almost dies of pneumonia, but is spared, much to the great relief of her family. In the second instance, Andy is finally successful in finding the missing woman. In the end, too, his financial affairs are straightened out, as well as his love affairs, and all's well with the Hardys once more.

As usual, Mickey Rooney carries most of the footage as Andy Hardy, and as usual he turns in a swell performance.

Direction, again, by George B. Seitz.
Running time—90 minutes.